MODULE 2
ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING STABILITY AND CONTINUITY

COMPETENCIES

Organizing Information Flows
Working and Managing Across Functions
Planning and Coordinating Projects
Measuring and Monitoring Performance and Quality
Encouraging and Enabling Compliance

Joining an organization gives us an opportunity to work toward significant outcomes that we could not accomplish individually. To make that opportunity a reality, members must find ways to coordinate their activities. Complete flexibility without any control would result in chaos.

Organizational Goals. Just as commitment and cohesion are important for the success of organizations, so, too, are stability and continuity—the goals associated with the internal process model. Control is the action imperative of the internal process model based on the assumption that routinization will lead to stability and continuity. Key activities tend to be focused on internal issues and include defining responsibilities and measuring and documenting performance.

Paradoxes. While these activities are important, managers who create complex control systems often discover that excessive constraints on workers can paradoxically undermine the welfare of the organization. Similarly, an overemphasis on control also can result in getting the details right but failing to accomplish broader objectives. The paradoxical need to accomplish special projects while still completing day-to-day tasks is another challenge that managers focused on control must face. Perhaps the most

common paradox associated with control, however, relates to the creation of bureaucratic red-tape. Over time, rules and procedures that initially increased organizational effectiveness later become impediments to performance.

Competencies. The five competencies included in this module are all valuable for contending with the paradoxes associated with control. They take into account the impact that people, as well as organizational processes, have on the stability and continuity of the organization. We begin with a discussion of *organizing information flows.* Information is the lifeblood of the organization, and managing information effectively is a critical aspect of a managerial leader's job. Next, we offer general guidelines for *working and managing across functions* and then go on to describe some specific tools that managers can use when *planning and coordinating projects.* Our fourth competency in this module, *measuring and monitoring performance and quality,* takes us beyond issues of process to consider the types of outcomes that organizations seek to achieve. Evaluating organizational outcomes has become even more complex in recent years, as social and political pressures have been applied to get businesses to think about more than just increasing the value of their stock. We conclude this module with the quintessential control question—how can managers *encourage and enable compliance?* We consider this question with respect to compliance with not only organizational rules and procedures, but also with legal and regulatory requirements for organizations.

Module 2 Competency 1 Organizing Information Flows

ASSESSMENT Identifying Data Overload and Information Gaps

Objective Before we can manage data overload, we need to recognize it. Sometimes we assume that all the data that comes to us is information that we need. This exercise will help you think about the amount and type of data that you receive and how important those data really are to you.

Directions Listed below are some questions about the amount of data and information you routinely have to deal with. You should answer these questions individually. Your instructor also may have you discuss them in small groups or as a class.

Discussion Questions

1. Has the amount of paper and documents confronting you at school, at work, and in your personal life increased or decreased over the past two years?
2. Do you feel you have become more skillful in sorting, storing, transmitting, and using information?
3. Do you spend time on the Internet scouring through data, only to log off much later without an answer to your question?
4. What are your major sources of overload in managing information—email, paper, phone messages, verbal instructions, and requests from others? What are two or three specific things you can do to manage this overload more effectively?
5. Do you often receive information that you don't have any real use for? Do you receive the same information in multiple formats (e.g., email message, paper memo, voice mail message)?

6. How confident do you feel about the information you have on your current performance as an employee? As a student? Do you know where you stand with your supervisor or boss? With your instructors?
7. What additional information would you like to have on these roles?

Reflection Organizational systems are not always designed to provide efficient information flows. "Better safe than sorry" appears to be the motto of much corporate communication. Emails that are sent to everyone are later followed up with paper copies, "just in case someone doesn't check their email." Memos about scholarship opportunities for children of employees are sent to everyone, regardless of whether or not they have children. Viewed individually, none of these communications is particularly problematic. However, as our recycle bins fill start to overflow and our email accounts exceed our allotted capacity, these unnecessary data inflows take their toll—when employees feel overwhelmed, organizational performance suffers.

LEARNING Organizing Information Flows

New technologies have greatly increased the amount of information we receive and the speed at which requested information arrives. In the past we could write a letter, drop it in the mailbox, and then turn our attention to other things while we waited for a reply. Now, with fax machines, cell phones, laptops, and PDAs, responses can be immediate, pushing the work back onto our desks before we even have time to take a deep breath.

Back in 1997, David Shenk wrote, "Information overload has replaced information scarcity as an important new emotional, social, and political problem" (Shenk, 1997, p. 29). Since then, the problem has only gotten worse. In 2006 alone, the amount of digital data produced was equal to three million times the information contained in all the books ever written (Nordenson, 2008). It is no surprise then, that a recent survey of 650 professionals found that across 23 professions such as consulting, financial services, and education, 69.6 percent of respondents reported that they were overloaded by the amount of information they have to cope with related to their jobs (Davis, 2008).

Paradoxically however, even though managers have a smorgasbord of data at their fingertips, they also often claim to be starved for good information (Beard & Peterson, 2003). This apparent contradiction stems in part from our failure to distinguish between data and information. The term "data" refers to facts that have no particular context or organization and, as a result, data have no clear meaning. To make data meaningful, those facts must be organized and given context. It is in this way that data are translated into meaningful and, therefore useful, information (Beard & Peterson, 2003). To keep things simple in this text, we sometimes use the term "information" when it would be more accurate to say "data and/or information." Keep in mind, however, that if it isn't meaningful and useful, it really isn't information!

DATA INFLOWS: ARE YOU IN DATA OVERLOAD?

Russel Ackoff, an international consultant on managerial problem solving, says that a major problem confronting managers is too much irrelevant information. Managers are surrounded by data that do not tell them what they need to know but that demand attention anyway. Smart managers learn to watch the helpful data and ignore the irrelevant stuff. Less sophisticated managers drown in information anxiety. Richard Wurman, an expert on making information visually accessible, says, "Information anxiety is produced by the ever widening gap between what we understand and what we think we should understand. [It is] the black hole between data and knowledge. It happens when information doesn't tell us what we want or need to know" (Wurman, 2001, p. 14). See whether you identify with some of these symptoms of information overload as a student or employee:

1. Chronically talking about not keeping up with what's going on around you.
2. Nodding your head knowingly when someone mentions a book, an artist, or a news story that you have actually never heard of.
3. Assuming you must read every email you receive, regardless of who sent it.
4. Thinking that the person next to you understands everything and you don't.
5. Calling something that you don't understand "information." It isn't information if you don't understand it (Wurman, 1989, pp. 35–36).

The fashion of referring to virtually any kind of data as "information" emerged when we started using the word to describe anything that was transmitted over an electrical or mechanical channel (Campbell, 1982). The term "information" meant anything sent by any channel to any receiver, whether or not the receiver found it informative or interesting. "Information" has since become one of the most important terms in our society; however, much of the information we receive is really just unformed data.

We are inundated with bits and pieces of data, disconnected from any coherent picture, and yet we still feel guilty when we can't assimilate it. Information is probably best thought of as "that which reduces uncertainty." If the information we use is only adding to our uncertainty, it is probably data that have not yet been converted to information. Wurman (2002) suggests that most of us need to get beyond the anxiety of not knowing so we can begin to understand. He wants us to relax, feel less guilty about our ignorance, and begin to play with and exploit information instead of being controlled and intimidated by it. That is great advice, but how do we get to that point?

THE TRAF SYSTEM: TOSS, REFER, ACT, FILE

Today's managers are more harried than ever before, not only because of all the data coming at them from so many different sources, but also because many of them are now working without an assistant. Assistants have traditionally filtered a lot of information and transactions for managers, but many of these support positions have been eliminated from contemporary organizations. Thus, the individual manager has increasingly had to handle the channeling and managing of information. The bad news is that the problem of data overload is here to stay. The good news is that managers can become more efficient and effective if they learn and apply some tools and strategies for handling data inflows.

folders to organize your email, take some time during the next week to create some folders for the different types of messages that you need to save. If there are more old messages in your inbox than you have time to sort, put all the old messages in a "to be filed" folder. Starting with an empty inbox will help you measure your success at keeping your email organized at the end of each day.

Reflection Although most "personal productivity" advocates such as David Allen, author of *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*, have urged us to clean up our clutter, not everyone agrees that we are more productive if we are perfectly organized. In their 2007 book *A Perfect Mess: The Hidden Benefits of Disorder—How Crammed Closets, Cluttered Offices, and On-the-Fly Planning Make the World a Better Place*, Eric Abrahamson and David H. Freedman state, "Though it flies in the face of almost universally accepted wisdom, moderately disorganized people, institutions, and systems frequently turn out to be more efficient, more resilient, more creative and in general more effective than highly organized ones" (Abrahamson & Freedman, 2007, p. 5). The Competing Values Framework helps explain this apparent paradox. Precisely controlled and perfectly organized information may be the ideal from the perspective of the Control quadrant with its emphasis on establishing and maintaining stability and continuity, but the Create quadrant reminds us that there also is value in flexibility, which increases our ability to adapt to new situations.

Module 2 Competency 2 Working and Managing Across Functions

ASSESSMENT Mapping Your Organization

Objective The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify where you fit within your organization and how you are connected to other areas. Understanding how the different parts of your organization fit together can help you more effectively apply some of the other competencies that you are studying. For example, with regard to organizing information flows, understanding the overall organization structure will help you identify where you should seek information as well as where you should send information.

Directions

1. If you are currently employed, obtain a copy of an organization chart for your employer. If you are not currently employed, find a copy of your school's organizational chart (check with the Human Resources office at your institution). Review the official chart and observe how the structure of the organization is presented. Is there anything that indicates how the different parts of the organization work together? Are differences in the relative power of different departments apparent? If you had to put together a cross-functional team to work on an important project, is it clear who would need to be on the team? Are there any divisions or units that might be in competition for customers?
2. Think about your job in the organization (as employee or student), and draw a new chart. Put yourself in the center and draw connections to all the areas in the organization that you need to be effective in your work. Which areas are you most dependent on to get your work done? Which areas depend on inputs from you to get their work done?

Reflection The formal structure found in most organization charts is often only a modestly accurate representation of how things actually work. Effective managers need to understand not only the official roles and responsibilities in the organization, but also need to recognize the informal networks that can help (or hinder) task accomplishment.

LEARNING Working and Managing Across Functions

More than 20 years ago, the authors of *Made in America: Regaining the Productive Edge* argued that to be successful in the global economy, U.S. companies needed to have greater functional integration and less organizational stratification because functional silos often result in inefficiencies in communication and coordination, the very functions that hierarchical structures were intended to support (Dertouzes, Lester, Solow & the MIT Commission on Industrial Productivity, 1989). Over the next 10 years, many companies attempted to heed that advice. *Reengineering the Corporation* by Michael Hammer and James Champy (1993) became a best-seller. Companies began to establish teams made up of specialists from different functional areas. These cross-functional teams became especially popular, in part because they did not require excessive disruptions to the existing organizational structure. The results of cross-functional teams, however, did not always live up to their promise. For example, a study looking at 93 research and new product development teams found that functional diversity, per se, did not improve team outcomes. It was only when external communication increased due to "having members with diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise and diverse contacts with important external networks of information" that benefits were realized (Keller, 2001).

Despite growing evidence that cross-functional teams are not a panacea, their use continues to grow, driven in part by the changing nature of work (Cross, Ehrlich, et al., 2008) New technologies that allow work to be done around the globe have become increasingly affordable. Companies have outsourced activities and depend on other organizations to do tasks that were formerly handed internally. These changes have resulted in additional flexibility and also resulted in additional costs that need to be accounted for and controlled. "Teams today are frequently formed and disbanded rapidly, distributed across multiple sites, and composed of members simultaneously working on myriad projects, with different bosses, competing for their attention. Further these teams' work increasingly demands substantial coordination and integration of specialized expertise within *and* outside of the team" (Cross, Ehrlich, et al., 2008).

As described in the next section, working in and managing these types of cross-functional teams poses new challenges compared to working in a traditional functional organization. An additional set of challenges is faced when working in organizations with potentially competing divisions, a topic we address in the subsequent section.

Directions You are president of the University Students Services Association (USSA). USSA is a student-run organization that coordinates the activities of all other student-run organizations on campus. USSA monitors scheduling of all extracurricular activities, tracks consistency of student organization activities with university policy, and attempts to provide resource support whenever possible.

In the past, each major university organization—such as Academic Support Services, the USSA, the Student Health Services, the Honor Society, and so on—conducted its own new-student orientation during the general orientation prior to the beginning of the fall semester. These orientations typically lasted anywhere from one to three hours and included speeches, presentations, videotapes, and workshop-type activities. For most organizational units, these orientations were seen as an opportunity to publicize the way in which they contributed to students' experience of university life. Organizational units spent a great deal of time, effort, and attention in preparing their individual orientations, because they felt it was important for students to learn about how they might take advantage of the services provided. Organizational units took great pride in conducting a professional presentation and paid close attention to the evaluations that students completed. In fact, there was something of an informal competition among the units, with each trying to be the most innovative in its presentation.

This year the provost has decided to try a new approach, declaring that all student orientation sessions will be centrally coordinated and run over a three-day period during the first week of classes. You have been asked to head the team that coordinates this orientation.

Your first task is to prepare a one-page outline of how you will approach this new responsibility. After you have completed the outline, respond to the process questions below.

Process Questions

1. What work- or task-related issues need to be addressed in order to carry out the provost's request?
2. What people-related issues do you foresee?
3. What issues of internal and external integration will need to be addressed in carrying out this task?
4. What was better about the previous format for student orientations? What is better about the new format?

Reflection Planning, of course, is only the beginning. Before any plan can be implemented, people will need to be convinced to go along with the plan. This is where the competencies such as Championing and Selling New Ideas and Negotiating Agreement and Commitment (see Module 4) come into play.

APPLICATION Examining a Cross-Functional Team

Objectives Use what you have learned about managing across functions to improve your own work situation.

Directions Identify a situation that you are currently in at school, at work, or in some other formal organization that has cross-functional elements to it.

1. Analyze the situation in terms of the guidelines presented in this section. In analyzing the situation, find specific ways in which the situation is being managed well, as well as problems. When you identify a problem, try to determine its specific source(s). That is, don't just say, "Meetings do not accomplish anything," try to determine the cause of the problem. Are goals unclear? Are the wrong people attending the meeting? Was an agenda distributed in advance? As you work on your analysis, keep in mind the importance of providing evidence to support your claims about problems and making connections to theory to support any recommendations you might make.
2. Once you are confident that you have identified the root causes of the problem, write a memo suggesting how the operations of the cross-functional team could be improved.

Reflection Managing cross-functional teams is complicated by the fact that there are often political, as well as practical, reasons why certain individuals are on the team. Because being left off a team may be considered a slight, cross-functional teams sometimes balloon into large groups. Novices who attempt to reduce the group to a more efficient size, however, may end up making the situation worse rather than better.

Module 2 Competency 3

Planning and Coordinating Projects

ASSESSMENT Project Planning

Objective This exercise is intended to prime your thinking about effective project management by encouraging you to reflect on your past project experiences.

Directions Think about a project or event you have worked on, preferably one in which you had some leadership responsibility. (Note that having leadership responsibility does not necessarily mean that you were the sole project leader.) Think about the planning and coordination, and respond to the questions below.

1. To what extent were goals and objectives made explicit? What role did you play in clarifying goals and objectives?
2. To what extent was the project explicitly segmented into smaller, more manageable activities? Describe the process by which the project was divided up. What role did you play in dividing the project into the smaller activities?
3. To what extent was there a clear understanding regarding a schedule or time line? What role did you play in devising the schedule?
4. To what extent was there a need to coordinate resources (money, equipment, supplies) as well as people? What role did you play in the coordination of resources?
5. Overall, how well was this project or event coordinated? What were the key successes? Where were some needed details overlooked?

Reflection As we noted in Module 1 in the Managing Groups and Leading Teams competency, when a project is assigned there is often a tendency to try to skip over the planning and coordination tasks, and to dive directly into working on the project. Effective managers recognize that this is a mistake. Looking back at your prior experiences with project work gives you an opportunity to identify any points where planning and coordination broke down. As you read the Learning material for this competency, think about whether the tools and techniques described would have helped you to avoid those problems.

Directions Choose a complex project or a program in which you are involved at school or work, or in a community organization to which you belong. If you cannot think of any such projects, think about a complex project you would like to undertake, such as organizing a fund-raising event for a nonprofit organization that you think does good work.

Write a proposal designed to convince other people to support your project. Start with a brief description of the project and what you consider to be the most challenging aspects of its planning. Then, using the planning tools presented in this competency (SOW, WBS, PERT/CPM, Gantt charts), show how you would plan to complete the project on time and within cost. If there are important issues of internal and external integration that will affect the success of the project, discuss how these issues will be handled.

Reflection Planning a complex project is typically not something that is done in a single session and then cast in stone. Many issues may arise that cause implementation activities to deviate from the original plan. The more complex the project, the more opportunities there are for problems to emerge. The fact that many projects fail to meet their objectives (Anatatmula, 2008) serves to emphasize the importance of project management skills in organizations today.

Module 2 Competency 4 Measuring and Monitoring Performance—and Quality

ASSESSMENT Identifying Appropriate Performance Criteria

Objective The first three competencies in this module focused primarily on different ways to accomplish tasks. For this competency, we turn our attention to the metrics that are used to evaluate your performance toward achieving critical outcomes.

Directions

1. Consider your current job, or if you are not currently employed, think about your job as a student. What are the most critical ***outcomes*** of your job—what are you actually trying to accomplish (e.g., sell 1,000 cases of wine; create an award-winning advertising campaign; learn how to analyze financial statements; earn an MBA, etc.).
2. Next, think about the tasks that you are asked to perform as part of your job. Are those tasks clearly linked to the outcome that you are trying to achieve? Are there some activities that seem to be unnecessary, or even counterproductive, for your outcome goals?
3. Finally, identify the points at which you receive feedback about your performance, as well as the types of feedback that you receive. You may find it helpful to construct a simple diagram that incorporates a time line to show when you perform different tasks and when you receive feedback.

Discussion Questions

1. How satisfied were you with your performance feedback prior to completing this exercise?
2. When considered in more detail, is the feedback that you receive specific and relevant to your tasks and critical outcomes? Do you receive the feedback on a timely basis?
3. Did any of the feedback that you receive seem irrelevant to your critical outcomes?
4. Are there any things that you would like to receive feedback about that you currently do not?

Reflection Although providing feedback has been linked to better motivation and performance (as we shall see in Module 3, Competency 3—Motivating Self and Others), lack of timely feedback is still a common complaint in organizations. (One of us once submitted an annual self-evaluation in September and did not receive feedback from the Dean until the following July!) One solution to the challenge of providing timely feedback is to make performance criteria explicit and provide employees with methods to monitor their own performance. For example, rather than waiting until after the semester is over to get formal student evaluation feedback, some faculty take advantage of web-mediated survey systems to gather student perceptions early in the semester so they can respond to concerns when they arise, rather than after the students have completed the course. Monitoring progress and providing feedback at frequent intervals may add slightly to short-term costs, but the long-term benefits can be very worthwhile.

LEARNING Measuring and Monitoring Performance and Quality

Establishing and maintaining stability and control depends upon having effective measurement and monitoring systems. For example, we count inventory to be sure there is enough on hand to meet anticipated demand and to identify losses from spoilage or theft. We review medical charts to see if patients have been given appropriate treatments. We record the number and length of telephone calls a customer service representative handles in a day to evaluate his productivity. We observe employees to be sure their appearance and behavior fit with our professional norms. All these measures are relevant, but are they the most important things to measure and monitor? This competency is designed to help managers find answers to that surprisingly complex question.

DECIDING WHAT TO MONITOR AND HOW TO MEASURE IT

What happens when organizations fail to monitor the right processes and outcomes? Steven Kerr (1975) addressed this question in his classic article, "On the Folly of Rewarding A While Hoping for B." Kerr provided multiple examples of situations where organizations were measuring the wrong things, resulting in reward systems that actually discouraged employees from achieving their stated goals! For example, telephone service representatives may be told that their goal is to satisfy the customer. If, however, their compensation is based solely on how many calls they handle in an hour, then they have an incentive to get customers off the phone as quickly as possible.

In explaining why reward systems sometimes use measures that are inappropriate for maximizing organizational efficiency, Kerr identified four causes. Two causes relate to the characteristics of the measurement itself. First, organizations tend to be fascinated with "objective" criteria, rather than more qualitative subjective measures. Second, organizations tend to overemphasize highly visible behavior. Both these causes are consistent with the idea that organizations tend to measure what is easy, rather than trying to measure what is most relevant. A third cause of inappropriate measurement, according to Kerr, is hypocrisy—where the stated "goals" are not actually the true goals. Finally, Kerr suggested that sometimes reward systems are designed to emphasize something other than efficiency, such as morality or equity.

see yourself in the future. Are there some tasks that you could begin to delegate? As we discussed in Module 1, Competency 3—Mentoring and Developing Others, delegating can both help you improve your supervisory skills and free up time for developing skills in new areas. Perhaps you can incorporate some metrics for leading new initiatives into your performance evaluation to demonstrate your ability to manage change in your organization, a topic that we address in Module 4, Competency 5—Implementing and Sustaining Change.

Module 2 Competency 5 Encouraging and Enabling Compliance

ASSESSMENT Reactions to Methods of Encouraging Compliance

Objective This exercise is designed to help you assess your attitudes about complying with rules and how you tend to respond to different methods used to encourage compliance.

Directions First, think about how frequently you engage in the following behaviors, and rate yourself using the following scale: 0 = Never; 1 = Rarely; 2 = Sometimes; 3 = Often

1. Drive faster than the posted speed limit
2. Skip classes
3. Arrive late to meetings
4. Submit assignments that don't reflect your best effort

Next, think about why you behave as you do.

1. What factors are influencing your behavior in each of these situations?
2. What assumptions are you making about the "rule" associated with each situation?

Finally, consider how you would feel and whether your behavior would change under the following circumstances.

1. a. The cost of speeding tickets was doubled.
   b. People caught speeding had to attend an automobile safety class.
   c. People with no speeding tickets during a calendar year received a check for $25 in January of the following year.
2. a. Students earned extra-credit points for each class attended.
   b. Students lost points from their overall average for each class missed.
   c. Students were required to write a paper for each missed class.
3. a. Your boss drew attention to your lateness when you arrived at the meeting.
   b. Your boss spoke to you after the meeting about being on time in the future.
   c. You discovered that before you arrived a task you really wanted to work on had been assigned to someone else.
4. a. Your instructor recorded a low grade on the assignment you submitted.
   b. Your instructor asked you to revise and resubmit the assignment.
   c. Your instructor asked you to come to office hours to discuss the assignment.

Reflection It is critical for managers to understand that individuals may respond differently to different methods of encouraging compliance. For example, some people may resent what they perceive to be "bribes" for good behavior. Others may feel that "threats" are demeaning to their professionalism. Unintended consequences often result when strategies for encouraging compliance are not carefully thought through and explained to employees.

LEARNING Encouraging and Enabling Compliance

Although in theory organizational members may be expected to comply with formal rules, policies, and procedures, as well as more informal norms about behavior, we know that in practice, there are myriad instances, both small and large, of noncompliance.

In this section we first consider reasons why individuals may not comply with organizational rules, policies, procedures, and norms. Next, we outline basic strategies for encouraging compliance. We also consider the sometimes paradoxical consequences of attempts to increase individual-level compliance. For simplicity, we generally do not distinguish among rules, policies, procedures, and norms. Instead we use the term "rule" to refer to these different concepts more generically.

We conclude this competency with a discussion of issues related to organizational-level compliance. In particular, we consider compliance with U.S. federal laws prohibiting criminal conduct such as perpetrating fraud, discharging environmentally hazardous waste, evading taxes, and engaging in anticompetitive activities.

UNDERSTANDING NONCOMPLIANCE

At the core of all sport lies a fundamental tension between the desire for rules and the desire to break them.

Mitchell, Crosset, and Barr, 1999, p. 216

Using sports metaphors when talking about other types of organizations sometimes can be misleading, but when it comes to understanding how people react to rules, the quote above seems quite apt. It highlights a key paradox—we all seem to have a love-hate relationship with rules. We need rules to keep order, but we resent them when rules prevent us from doing what we would like to do.

Although it may be human nature for us all to prefer rules that work to our benefit, in practice, responses to specific rules can differ substantially based on situational variables as well as individual characteristics. Consider, for example, how people respond to speed limits. The speed limit posted on a road states the maximum legal driving speed, but some individuals are comfortable driving faster than the speed limit while others are not. The ways that different people *typically* respond to speed limits are based on individual-level variables. In contrast, even people who typically are comfortable driving faster than the speed limit are inclined to slow down if they see a police car. Similarly, people who believe it is important not to drive faster than the posted speed limit may decide to speed in an emergency, such as taking an injured friend to the